

FINDING ONE'S LIFE WORK.

We are accustomed to say, it is a great hour in a boy's life when he finds himself, when he reaches up, almost in a day, from boyhood to being a man, when he finds his powers and their capacity. It is a greater hour when a man finds his life work, when he realizes his mission here.

No thoughtful man imagines that one's mission is to translate effort into bread and meat and raiment, even if it be for loved ones in the home.

A life is more than a living. We make a living, we are a life. What we are is infinitely more than what we can get and hold. It is no insult to say that a man only finds his life work at the feet of Jesus. Some years ago at a meeting of the Synod at Petersburg, the members were greatly startled by a man of at least sixty-five, arising and saying, "This is my twenty-first birthday." What he meant was, he was born of God's Spirit twenty-one years before, and all the rest of his life he counted as nothing. He was thinking along the same line with Paul, who exclaimed, "The past of my life is enough to have wrought the futile will of the Gentiles." Saul found his mission at the feet of the Just One against whom he was unconsciously and futilely fighting. It is certain that we must find our life work in the circumference of the will of God for us.

Jesus said to Ananias, "Go and tell Saul that the God of his fathers has chosen him, that he should know God's will." What a great thing that is! God speaks to us, sometimes through natural gifts and graces, which He bestows. They become for us indices of His will.

He speaks to us through circumstances. The pointers are about us and if we are wise enough we will find them. God speaks to us direct through His Spirit. There is a voice behind each one of us saying, "This is the way, walk ye in it." What a magnificent backing to a man's life, to know that he has God's will behind him. Is there any difficulty too great for him to face and overcome?

The great men who have wrought terribly and pushed this weak and sinful world a little higher up the hill, have been men who reckoned not with man, but clove close to the will of God, who felt chosen of Him to do a certain thing.

Then, too, our life work is found in witnessing to the divine things we have seen and heard. It is so simple. Just where we are we are to witness to what we know of Jesus Christ.

Saul did not know much at first. There must have been a spiritual development in his life as in ours, yet what he knew he was neither ashamed of nor afraid to declare. We may not have appreciated the difficulties of Saul's earlier experiences. He was in the midst of cruel enemies. He was among Christians who were naturally shy of him. He naturally did not like to turn completely around in his set opinions, any more than we would. Yet Saul did not hesitate one day. He immediately declared Jesus was the divine and risen Son of God, and confounded the arguments of all in the Synagogue.

The hardest thing for him to bear with his fiery temperament was the cool and critical atmosphere of the Christian Church at Jerusalem. If that stopped him from testifying at Jerusalem, it did not keep him from Cilicia and Tarsus and afterwards from Antioch. Our life work can be no greater than our testimony for Jesus. Quietly, earnestly, by life as well as by lip, telling men the story.

It transforms lives. It enlarges life. It puts a permanent, heavenly value on our souls. It

is like the path of the just, growing brighter toward the perfect day.

A. A. L.

Contributed**TWO GRIEFS OF JESUS.**

By Rev. Parke P. Flournoy.

Why "Jesus," instead of Christ? Because it was the name ordered to be given Him, coming into the world as a human being, a divine Saviour, indeed, but alas, a man, that He, "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief," might suffer and die to save us, suffering and sinful men.

The announcement of the Apostles, who, when John the Baptist had been beheaded, took up the headless corpse "and buried it, and went and told Jesus" (Matthew 14:12), the blow was one of unspeakable severity. John was His kinsman, His fore-runner sent to prepare His way before Him, greater than all other prophets, great in character and performing the functions of the most exalted office ever held by a human being.

Like all other normal human beings He longs for retirement from public gaze. In His great grief He went "into a desert place apart" (verse 13). Who can "measure the magnitude of His grief? when His soul's cry was, "All Thy waves and Thy billows are gone over me."

Ah! when it is so with us, do we not draw the blinds close, and seek to shut out the gaze and noise of all the world, that we may be alone, and seek the presence of the everlasting arms of our merciful, loving Father in heaven? No other comforter can compare with Him who brought, and yet controls, all the waves and billows of overwhelming grief, when death tears from our bosoms our little ones or breaks the loving cords that have bound us to one even dearer still.

But we should not and cannot continue in our solitude. Duty calls, and we must rise and obey, however painful it may be. There are other sufferers in this sad world, and we hear their sighs, witness their wounds. Our griefs must not be selfish. Even in His solitude, a multitude of sufferers sought Him, and in their woes, brought to Him another great grief. Grieving over one He is now called to grieve over and grieve with, and help and solace, thousands.

They gathered round His hiding place, "and when the people heard thereof, they followed Him on foot out of the cities, and Jesus went forth and saw a great multitude, and" (an- noyed? as we would have been. Oh, no!) "was moved with compassion toward them, and healed their sick" (v. 14).

This done, He seeks solitude again, but for another purpose; "and when He had sent the multitude away He went up into the mountain apart to pray" (verse 23). He was "alone" again, grieving still, no doubt, but doing what we should do when "alone." We may seek comfort, meditating upon the love and trust in our Saviour of one "lost awhile" from us; but are there not others left with us, for whom we are to do all that in us lies, that when their time of departure comes, they, too, may "depart to be with Christ, which is far better" than all earthly pleasures, gains or triumphs, even? And is not our highest duty to them "to pray" to Him through whose grace alone this glorious consummation can be secured?

Washington, D. C.

UNREST ON THE MISSION FIELDS.**Some Causes.**

By a Missionary.

The articles on the conditions in foreign fields that are constantly appearing in the home papers reflect a certain unrest which really exists. There is no denying that things are more or less disturbed. Several reasons may be given for this state of affairs.

We must remember that the Church on the foreign field is a young, growing Church. In many countries she is just coming into a consciousness of her existence. She must meet new conditions quite different from the West and adjust herself to surroundings that are not always helpful to her growth. The ministry and membership, too, is different and they often express their religious experiences in a way that is strange to us, yet after all may be in harmony with the teaching of the Bible. The wise missionary desires that the work under his care be grounded in the Bible and does not care whether everything is done as we would do it in our home churches. In other words, he does not want to inflict Western Church customs that are not vital on the Eastern people, but urges them to develop according to the teaching of the Bible. Of course there will be differences regarding the unessential things. In a word some of the unrest is due to "growing pains" and should not give us much concern.

Another source of unrest is found in the strong nationalistic consciousness that is developing in the native people. Some of the native Christian workers feel that it is a reflection on their country to be considered a "missionary field." The unconverted feel insulted to be classed with the heathen. These people are encouraged by a certain type of Western teachers to think that their civilization and ancient religions are as good as anything that comes from Christian countries. This strong nationalistic feeling affects the action of the native Church courts toward the work of the missionaries.

Some of the unrest is due to the constant interference from "missionary diplomats," who have assumed a peculiar responsibility for directing the Church policies on the foreign field. Organizations that are considered as creatures of the Church and auxiliary to the Church in the homeland sometimes assume a strong desire to run things abroad. Representatives of these auxiliary organizations are constantly visiting the various fields and always have some axe to grind and some new organization to put over. The mission fields are so burdened with organizations fostered by these circulating "missionary statesmen" that many workers give practically all their time to running to committee meetings. I heard of one man recently who declined to serve on some new committees by stating that committee work had taken two solid months of his time last year.

The National Christian Conference of China seems to be one of the imported organizations, a piece of heavy expensive machinery. The founders of this body had hardly given birth to it before they rushed to Japan and called a convention together and urged the formation of a like national conference in Japan. The cost of this convention was about 11,000 yen and most of the money came from New York. The "missionary statesman" always gets a sympathetic hearing from the Orientals, for the Orientals like to "organize." They organize much, but do not get very far. Wonderful plans were proposed for the national